



College of Arts and Sciences

Department of Computer Science

One University Boulevard  
St. Louis, Missouri 63121-4400

Telephone: 314-516-6520

Fax: 314-516-5400

August 14, 2022

Honorable Ronnie White  
St. Louis, MO

Honorable White:

I am Sanjiv Bhatia, working as a Professor of Computer Science at the University of Missouri – St. Louis. My job involves teaching courses in Computer Science in addition to performing research in my area of expertise Computer Vision. I also serve as the Graduate Director for Computer Science as well as a Faculty Senator.

Jared Diehl was a student of mine in the course in Operating Systems, a senior level course in the degree program. He took the course in the Fall 2020 semester. Additionally, he worked as my supplemental instructor for the Spring 2021 semester in the same course after having passed the course with an A.

Jared was an excellent student during the course. Towards the beginning of the course, he asked me permission to create a discord site where the students could discuss the projects that I assigned as well as the topics that we discussed in the lectures. I was not aware of discord at that point but I agreed and he added me as the course instructor in the site where I could actually see what they discussed. I was very happy with using discord as a tool in my course and wanted to continue using it but the university's information technology services did not have discord as an approved site (discord is mostly used by gamers) and suggested to use Microsoft Teams instead. So, I ended up making Jared the administrator for the Teams site and asked him to duplicate the functionality of discord which he did. I now routinely use Teams as a tool to encourage discussions in all my courses. However, I would not be using it if Jared did not introduce me to the idea. I feel that my students have started to perform better in their classes once I prompted discussions in this format. I should also mention that Operating Systems is one of the most difficult courses in the Computer Science curriculum and has a high dropout rate; I try anything to improve the performance of students in this course and Jared's idea has been on of the best I received, especially from a student's point of view. Jared not only performed well himself in the course but also helped other students perform better with his idea and efforts.

Overall, Jared has earned his BS in Computer Science with a 4.0 GPA. That is highly commendable as it shows his commitment to learning not just the concepts in Computer Science but also general education and critical thinking.

Jared took the course with me during the COVID pandemic. Therefore, my in-person interaction with him was limited. However, he made such an impression on me with his performance in the course and willingness to help others that I recommended him to be hired as a supplemental instructor for the following semester which he agreed to.

Jared contacted me this week to write a letter and told me about the mistake he made. I was actually surprised to hear about it but could feel him being contrite about it. It makes me feel even more strongly about the discussion of ethics in the profession of Computer Science during our undergraduate curriculum. I believe that Jared's conduct that landed him into trouble was committed prior to him learning about such issues in his curriculum.

I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have about my interactions with Jared.

Sincerely,

Sanjiv K. Bhatia  
Professor, Computer Science  
Email: sanjiv@umsl.edu